

Horicon Marsh State Wildlife Area 2015-16 Trapping Unit Information

Wetland Units

Six wetland units and one dike unit are available to trap for the 2015-16 season. One trapper and a helper are allowed per unit. Trappers are limited to one unit, either as a trapper or helper. Successful bidders and their helpers will be allowed to trap muskrats, raccoon, opossum, skunk, fox, coyote, mink, and weasel. In addition, 2 beaver and 2 otter (trapper and helper must possess a central zone otter tag) may be harvested per unit. Trapping season for all units will run from October 31, 2015 through March 15, 2016. Boats and skiffs are allowed in all of these units and ATV's may only be used on the ice. Boat motors are not allowed in the following units: J, K & L, N, and Bachhuber Dike. These units are located within waterfowl refuges. Pre-staking is allowed and stake willows may be cut on the Wildlife Area.

Youth/Disabled Trapper Unit

Any interested youth (between the ages of 12 to 17) or disabled trapper (must possess a disabled hunting permit) will be allowed to trap Unit N, free of charge. Trappers must obtain a permit at the auction or from the DNR office prior to trapping. Mentors may accompany the youth or disabled persons but will not be allowed to actually check or set traps.

Upland Permits

Upland trapping permits will be given free of charge. Upland trappers are only allowed to trap raccoon, opossum, skunk, fox, coyote, mink, and weasel. Species not allowed to be harvested under this permit include muskrat, beaver, and otter. Season dates for all species will run from October 31, 2015 through March 15, 2016. Upland trappers may trap on any Horicon State Wildlife Area uplands regardless of wetland unit boundaries. No wet sets will be allowed in order to minimize incidental muskrat harvest. Any incidental muskrat, otter, or beavers must be reported and dropped off at the DNR office located on Hwy 28.

Other Rules and Considerations

- All flagging, stakes, and traps must be removed by March 15, 2016.
- Trapper harvest reports are mandatory for all wetland and upland trappers. Reports are due by the 7th of each month. You may choose to call in your harvest, mail a report, or email your harvest.
- Preseason scouting by foot or boat is allowed at any time.
- Trappers will be billed \$25 for lost or unreturned keys.
- Be conscious, courteous, and respectful of other trappers, hikers, hunters, dogs, and other Wildlife Area users. Always portray a positive image because the future of trapping at Horicon depends on it.

2014-15 Season Summary:

It appeared that muskrats rebounded some from 2013-14 levels. Good water levels on the marsh throughout the spring and summer allowed for several successful litters. A relatively mild winter meant less ice to chisel for trappers and allowed muskrats to move about freely below the ice in search of food. DNR staff noticed more muskrat huts in the fall and winter than in the past two years as well. Although fewer units were available last year (14 in 2013 to 6 in 2014) and trappers were limited to trapping within 20 yards of the dikes, they were able to harvest twice as many muskrats than the previous year. A trapping season extension was granted last year due to the late ice-out and a need to reduce muskrats causing significant damage to dikes. Raccoon harvest was down significantly from the previous 2 years (125 in 2012, 32 in 2013, 3 in 2014) likely in part due to pelt prices but we've also seen pockets of distemper throughout the state affecting local populations of raccoons.

2014-15 Harvest Report:

Trapping Unit	Bid Amount	Catch
Burnett/Mieske Dike	\$150	126 muskrat, 1 raccoon, 1 beaver
Chaya Dike	\$1,000	714 muskrat, 2 raccoon, 1 mink, 2 beaver, 1 otter
I-1 & I-2 Dike	\$250	392 muskrat, 2 beaver, 1 otter
Bachhuber Dike	\$150	26 muskrat, 1 otter
Greenhead Dike	\$90	1 muskrat, 1 beaver, 1 otter
Youth	FREE	67 muskrat, 4 mink
	TOTAL	1,326 muskrat, 3 raccoon, 5 mink, 6 beaver, 4 otter

*1 upland trapper harvested an additional raccoon and coyote